



## APPEAL

of the First Hierarchs of the Orthodox Church of Greece,  
Holy Synod in Resistance, the Old Calendar Orthodox  
Church of Romania, and the Old Calendar  
Orthodox Church of Bulgaria

to the

*Most Reverend Hierarchs Agafangel and Tikhon and  
All of the Clergy and Faithful of the Russian  
Orthodox Church Abroad who have  
joined with either of them.*

[translated from the original Russian]

*26 June/9 July, 2007  
Tikhvin Icon of the Theotokos,  
St. David of Thessalonica*

Your Eminences, Esteemed Archpastors,  
Beloved Fathers in Christ, Brothers and Sisters!

We, the First Hierarchs of our three Sister Churches of Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria, address to you, “with one mouth and with one heart,” a word of love in Jesus Christ, our Lord: “Grace be unto

you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:3).

On Her historical path, the Holy Church of Christ has overcome, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, incredible ordeals. In our days, we are witnesses and—as members of Christ’s Body—partakers of the severe trial and sufferings which have befallen our beloved Sister, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. By ratifying, on May 17 of this year, their union with the Moscow Patriarchate, the leaders of the Church Abroad abjured the glorious feats of her confessors and missionaries and entered into the body of “world orthodoxy.” The honest, responsible children of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, who hold dear Holy Orthodoxy and love the Truth of Christ, were faced with a fateful choice. A portion of them joined Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk and Siberia, President of the Synod of the True Orthodox Church of Russia, and others Bishop Agafangel of Odessa and Tauris.

We are aware of the sharp disputes between Bishop Agafangel and the jurisdiction headed by Archbishop Tikhon, as evidenced in various sources of information. Nevertheless, it is evident that these disputes are not of doctrinal essence, and we believe that they can, by God’s Grace, be overcome. We all know, our dear Brothers, that in periods of grave hardship in the life of the Church, disputes have arisen even between holy persons, such as those between the Holy Hierarchs of Constantinople, Photius and Ignatius. Not in the least understating the gravity of the present trial, or the pain of the wounds of disunity, we appeal to you, Most Reverend Hierarchs Tikhon and Agafangel, with fervent fraternal entreaty,

in the name of the unity of the Holy Russian Orthodox Church Abroad;

in the name of the unity of our common Orthodox witness;

in the name of “these little ones” (St. Matthew 18:14), the faithful children of the Holy Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, whose Orthodox ecclesial consciences were crucified by their uniate Hierarchy, through whose hearts flow the bloody streams of

division, who until yesterday were together, while today they prove divided, passing under the *omophorion* of each of you:

We entreat you, our dear Brothers, to tread that thorny but blessed path to one another, so that, by the Grace of the Holy Spirit, you might overcome mutual separation, to the joy of both Angels and men, to the glory of the Holy Orthodox Church, to the joy and consolation of the suffering children of the Holy Russian Orthodox Church—and of all of us, your brothers in Christ. According to our strength, we are ready with fraternal love and assiduity to assist you in attaining God-pleasing unity between yourselves.

And you, our dear Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters, children of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, we exhort with these words of the Apostle: “We beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10). You have chosen the steep and narrow path. You struggle to enter through the strait gate (St. Matthew 7:14). You have not taken the wide road of treason, and have not succumbed to the temptations of mundane glory and earthly profits. May the Lord crown your feat with a victorious end!

With love in Christ and with fervent prayers to Him that we all be one,

† **CYPRIAN**, Metropolitan of Oropos and Fili,  
President of the Holy Synod in Resistance, Orthodox  
Church of Greece

† **VLASIE**, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the  
Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Romania

† **PHOTII**, Bishop of Triaditza, First Hierarch of the  
Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria